

William McCredie House
2606 Old Stage Road
Central Point
Jackson County
Oregon

HABS No. OR-128

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

WILLIAM McCREDIE HOUSE

Location: 2606 Old Stage Road, Central Point, Jackson County, Oregon.

Present Owner: Medford Forest Nursery, Rogue River National Forest, Region Six, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. (1978)

Present Occupant: Vacant.

Present Use: Vacant, to be relocated in the Jacksonville vicinity, Oregon.

Significance: The McCredie House is one of a dozen or more rural structures built during a period of agricultural expansion (circa 1900) in the area north of Jacksonville, Oregon. Historically, the McCredie House and land enjoys associations with a number of prominent local citizens including Granville Sears and Emil Britt. Originally a Donation Land Claim parcel, the land is adjacent to the Old Stage Road, once an important communications route in Southern Oregon.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. History of Structure:

The property on which the William McCredie House sits originally belonged to Thomas Ward. Ward filed for a Donation Land Claim in 1852 and formalized the transaction on June 8, 1866. The Donation Land Claim Act of 1850 did much to promote permanent settlement of the West. The name of Granville Sears is frequently mentioned in the records of the land. Sears, who owned his own Donation Land Claim nearby, may have acted in the capacity of an administrator in the Ward Claim.

The name of Emil Britt, son of a well-known Jacksonville photographer Peter Britt, also turns up with the names of subsequent owners of the property. It appears that Sears borrowed a sum of seven hundred dollars from Britt and placed a

WILLIAM MCCREDIE HOUSE
HABS No. OR-128 (Page 2)

portion of the Ward claim in Britt's hands as collateral. With the subsequent subdividing of the property into parcels, the lot upon which the house sits was transferred from Granville Sears to one A.S. Jacobs. Title records show that A.S. Jacobs transferred the land title to William and Missouri May McCredie in 1906.

The house itself was built circa 1906 by William McCredie. While Jackson County Tax Records show the house being built in 1905, the title records state that the McCredie's did not own the land until 1906. A daughter of the McCredie's, Mrs. Velma Lull, states that her father built the house, so there is a contradiction within the historical information. William McCredie, an orchardist, built the farmhouse during a period of agricultural expansion in the area north of Jacksonville. Expansion of these lands, including fruit orchards, took place soon after the construction of railroads in the area, making it feasible to ship produce north to Portland and south to Sacramento and San Francisco.

The house has stylistic affinities with its neighboring structures along Old Stage Road. Many of these structures, also farmhouses, were built just prior to and immediately after the construction of the McCredie House. These houses, with Italianate details, are similar in scale and materials to the McCredie House.

The McCredie House is located along Old Stage Road, which is also known as Valley Road and Old Foothills Road. This road was once part of the California Stage Company's route to Oregon. The California Stage Company applied for and received government permission to extend its service northward into southern Oregon in 1860. Ultimately, the company ran daily stages from Jacksonville (two and a half miles south of the McCredie House) south to Yreka, California, and from Jacksonville north to Portland; providing service to the area from 1860 to 1865.

B. Bibliography:

Medford Forest Nursery (compilers). McCredie House: Request for Determination of Eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. Medford, Oregon: Rouge River National Forest, 1978.

Prepared by Mary Beth Betts
Historic American Buildings
Survey
March 1979

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The McCredie House measures 32' (three-bay front) x 34'. The rectangular building is two-and-a-half stories with foundations of concrete and walls of wooden frame with tongue-in-groove siding. There is a hip roof with hip dormers and two brick chimneys. Small curved wooden brackets project every sixteen inches to support the eaves. One of the more notable features is the three-bay north (front) porch. The porch has a hip roof with a central pediment roof rising above the eave line to emphasize the entrance. The porch columns are of the Tuscan order and rest on square wooden bases. The porch railing is composed of simple wooden balusters. Another porch occurs on the (east) elevation and connected with a back porch, which has since been enclosed. There are two entrances on the north (front) side. They are of wood with carved ornamentation on the lower half and a single glass pane on the upper half.

There are four rooms on the first floor (two in front and two in back) with a central hall that runs north-south. The southern rooms are the kitchen and dining room. The kitchen originally opened on to the back porch, which has since been enclosed. The second floor is, again, based on a center hall plan with two bedrooms on the north (front) side of the house and a bedroom and large bathroom on the south. Most of the original woodwork remains, and is the most notable feature in the house. 36" high wainscoting appears in two of the first floor rooms, and other trim throughout the house consists of crown or cornice, and picture molding, and baseboards. The stairway between the first and second floor is of particular interest. It is composed of a short run of risers leading to the stairway proper, with a wooden newell post marking the start of the balustrade and handrail. At the top of the stairway another similar newell post stands. The balusters are simple lathe-turned tapering spindles reaching from tread to handrail. The newell posts are square, employing "bulls-eye" ornamentation in relief on three sides. The newell post is capped by a molding supported by a dentil range on four sides. Apparently missing from each side is a finial which was removed with a saw.

Only a few alterations have occurred since the house was built. At some point the back porch was enclosed and divided into a bathroom and a pantry. The interior has been altered with the additions of paneling, wallpaper, sheet linoleum on the floors, and accoustical ceiling tile. In the 1960s the electrical system was rewired.

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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Medford Forest Nursery in compliance with Executive Order 11593 and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative effort in the relocation of the McCredie House. John A. Burns, AIA was the HABS project coordinator. The written data was prepared in the HABS office by Mary Beth Betts in March 1979 from research compiled by the Medford Forest Nursery in 1978. Photographs were taken by Kenn Knackstadt, on March 27, 1978.